



CHRISTIAN
REFORMED
CHURCH
IN
NORTH
AMERICA

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Christian Reformed Church Councils

Dear Council Members:

Synod 2011 has completed its work, addressing significant matters before it. The delegates worked with diligence and care as they considered the reports and recommendations of the advisory committees of synod (e.g., Diversity in Leadership Planning Group Report, Faith Formation Committee, and the Form of Subscription Revision Committee II). Attached is a summary of those decisions that may be of particular interest to the churches. Please take time to review these highlights in an upcoming council meeting.

One of the highlights of synod this year was the approval of forty-two new candidates for ministry! What a blessing to be witness to a standing ovation of the more than 200 delegates and advisers, expressing their sincere gratitude for their commitment to ministry of the Word. In addition, synod gave special recognition to forty-seven ministerial retirees. We are grateful for the service of these dedicated servants of the church and wish them God's grace as they enter a new chapter in their lives.

Synod took it upon itself to ask the interim executive director to appoint a task force to conduct a review of the organization, culture, and leadership within the CRCNA and report back to Synod 2012. We are in the process of appointing the membership and will soon begin the work as directed by synod.

In a few weeks, you will receive the printed *Acts of Synod 2011* in which you will find a complete record of the decisions of synod. Prior to that, you will be notified when the electronic version is posted on the CRC website for your preview.

Finally, on behalf of the entire church, I want to extend our thanks to those who served synod as delegates and advisers. The spirit of unity, even in diversity, was evident all around. Synod attendees had the privilege of participating in an historical joint session with the general synod of the Reformed Church in America to highlight our partnership in ministry. The two synods then transitioned to a joint celebratory joint worship service—our unity in the Spirit abounded that afternoon!

In his service,

Joel R. Boot
Interim Executive Director

Encl: Summary of Synod 2011 Decisions for the Churches

Summary of Synod 2011 Decisions for CRC Councils

1. Appointment of Interim Executive Director

That synod ratify the appointment of Rev. Joel R. Boot as the Interim Executive Director of the CRCNA.

Grounds:

- a. While the BOT is authorized to make interim appointments as needed, it is appropriate that synod ratify this interim appointment because it precedes the meeting of synod by only a few weeks.
- b. The appointment is intended to fill the time of transition, anticipated to be for two (2) years, until an appointment can be made of a permanent executive director, following the normal proceedings of synod.
- c. It is prudent for Rev. Boot to be able to function at Synod 2011 in official capacity.
- d. Rev. Boot has served synod as president several times, as its vice-president, and as a delegate nine times.
- e. Rev. Boot is a trusted leader and is able to serve the Christian Reformed Church well in this time of transition.

(Acts of Synod 2011, pp. 786-87)

2. Diversity in Leadership

1. That synod affirm the direction of the report of the Diversity in Leadership Planning Group with respect to increasing multiethnic representation in the senior-level positions of the CRCNA.
2. That synod adopt the following statement of vision to address the issue of increasing multiethnic representation within the leadership of the denomination:

To reflect a multiethnic, multicultural leadership that models the report approved by Synod 1996, *God's Diverse and Unified Family* (GDUF).

It is essential that this vision for denominational leadership have an impact on every denominational entity, as illustrated on page 57 of the *Agenda for Synod 2011*.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 859)

That synod adopt the following recommendations from the Diversity in Leadership Planning Group report:

Nominations for Denominational Leadership

2. That search committees for senior positions include at least two members from different ethnic minorities in their membership.
 - a. Search committees shall include people who represent the rank and file of the church and who have a passion for the CRC and the agency's mission.
 - b. Search committee members will receive appropriate antiracism training, and all members of search committees will state their agreement with the *God's Diverse and Unified Family* report.

Grounds:

- a. This gives a voice to ethnic minorities prior to the hiring of senior leaders.
- b. Search committees will benefit from a diverse membership that can identify a diverse pool of potential candidates.

- c. Having at least two members representing differing ethnic minorities is intended to minimize potential feelings of isolation and intimidation of those members.
3. That synod instruct the BOT to appoint an expanded task force by August 31, 2011, that includes an ethnically and geographically diverse membership with the following broader mandate and that the director of Race Relations will serve in an advisory role as requested by the task force:

To develop further short-term and long-term strategies for increasing multiethnic representation within the leadership of the denomination and report through the BOT to Synod 2013.

Grounds:

- a. An expanded task force brings additional voices from various backgrounds to the table.
 - b. This expanded mandate will allow the Diversity in Leadership Planning Group to address a multi-pronged approach to increasing multiethnic leadership in the denomination.
 - c. This will allow for input from a broader range of stakeholders.
4. That synod recommit non-adopted recommendations from the Diversity in Leadership Planning Group report (B, 2, 3, 4, 5-b, -c, -d, 9-b, -c) to the newly expanded Diversity in Leadership Planning Group for information and revision by September 30, 2012, specifically addressing the following concerns:
 - a. The role of the Office of Race Relations.
 - b. The addition of measurable goals.
 - c. The inclusion of strategies that focus on raising up, mentoring, and giving experience to diverse leaders at all levels, and that foster a multiethnic leadership development plan in local congregations, classes, regional networks, and denominational offices.

Grounds:

- a. These recommendations, while helpful, need further development.
 - b. This timeframe will provide adequate opportunity for the group to do this important work.

Note: Recommendation 8 from the original report (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, p. 60) has been implemented by the Board of Trustees.

(*Acts of Synod 2011*, pp. 867-68)

3. Structure and Cultural Review Task Force

That synod reaffirm the Ministry Plan of the Christian Reformed Church and the Ministries Priorities Report to maintain a focus on creating and sustaining healthy congregations and appoint a CRCNA Structure and Cultural Review Task Force to conduct a review of the organization, culture, and leadership within the CRCNA, and that the task force make recommendations directly to Synod 2012.

Grounds:

- a. The BOT recognizes the need for a major review as evidenced by their current plans.
 - b. A broadly based, synodically appointed task force will diminish the perceived conflict of interest of a BOT-appointed task force.

- c. The abrupt and painful resignation of key leaders in our denomination demonstrates the need for the task force.
 - d. Conflicting governance and administrative structures need resolution.
 - e. The current organizational culture is unhealthy.
- (Acts of Synod 2011, pp. 864-65)*

4. Translation of the Three Reformed Standards

1. That Synod 2011 adopt the revised translation of the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort as presented (see Appendices, pp. 183-298) for use in the CRC.

Grounds:

- a. The revised translations not only preserve the best from our previous excellent translations, but in many instances more closely reflect the meaning of the original documents.
- b. These revised translations have now benefited from taking into account the many responses and suggestions of churches and individuals since the proposal before Synod 2010.
- c. The sharing of a common confessional text among three Reformed denominations has the potential for positive ecumenical impact. In fact, the work on this common text has already placed the CRC in the position of encouraging confessional renewal in other denominations.
- d. A common translation of the confessions will greatly increase cooperation and partnership between the CRC and RCA denominations.
- e. This is consistent with the decision of Synod 2010 to create “a common text of the three forms of unity as important for increasing cooperation and partnership between the RCA and the CRC” (*Acts of Synod 2010*, p. 819).

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 854)

Resolution for the Common Translation of the Three Reformed Standards

To recognize the passage of the common translations of the doctrinal standards by the synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the general synod of the Reformed Church in America, and, further,

To affirm the usage of these translations in our joint publishing efforts through Faith Alive Christian Resources, and

To celebrate the historic vote by the respective synods, and to affirm it in each other’s presence, we will sing the doxology to signify our mutual affirmation and declare it to be the first joint-action of the general synod of the Reformed Church in America and the synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

In affirmation of the resolution, delegates join in singing the doxology “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow.”

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 883)

5. Faith Formation

1. That synod endorse “Affirming Baptism and Forming Faith” as a guiding document for the work of denominational agencies and congregations in the area of faith formation (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 550-69).

Grounds:

- a. The document is consistent with Scripture and the Reformed confessions.
 - b. The document has received substantial input from the denomination over the past four years, including a plenary discussion of the document by Synod 2009 and a request from Synod 2010 that congregations review the report and offer feedback to the committee.
 - c. The document offers timely perspectives on important challenges facing congregations.
2. That synod adopt the changes to the Church Order and its Supplement as presented (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 572-76), with the following editorial changes in Article 59-c and Supplement, Articles 78-81-b (changes noted in italics):

- a. Article 59-c

Proposed by Advisory Committee

"Privileges include but are not limited to presentation of children for *holy* baptism, the right to vote at congregational meetings, and eligibility to hold office."

- b. Supplement, Articles 78-81-b

Proposed by Advisory Committee

"The privileges of confessing membership include but are not limited to *presentation of* children for holy baptism, the right to vote at congregational meetings, and eligibility to hold office."

Grounds:

- 1) These changes provide for the implementation of the decision of Synod 2010 about age- and ability-appropriate participation in the Lord's Supper.
 - 2) These changes have been before the churches for an adequate amount of time, according to the requirements of Church Order Supplement, Article 47-b. Therefore, they can be adopted by Synod 2011.
 - 3) These changes acknowledge that while profession of faith is a vital practice for faith formation, neither Scripture nor the confessions require that it take place prior to participation in the Lord's Supper.
 - 4) These changes promote a consistency of terminology within the Church Order to guide our churches in their practice of faith formation.
 - 5) The editorial changes provide for consistent language in reference to baptism and are supported by the Faith Formation Committee.
- c. Amendment to Article 59-b: Delete the sentence in proposed change to the new Article 59-b: "This public profession of faith includes a commitment to the creeds and confessions of the Christian Reformed Church" (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, p. 573).
1. That synod accept the revised version of "Children at the Table" (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 577-612) as fulfillment of the mandate of the Faith Formation Committee to formulate "a clear statement about the participation of baptized children at the Lord's Supper and the practice of public profession of faith for use in the churches."

Grounds:

- a. The document is consistent with Scripture and the Reformed confessions.
- b. Synod 2010 endorsed an earlier draft of the document as sufficient basis for approving a principle to guide further work on the topic.

- c. The revised document includes the changes requested by Synod 2010.
 - d. This action will allow the document to be received by our congregations and by our ecumenical conversation partners as a document accepted by synod.
2. That synod affirm the following principle regarding infant dedication to guide the continuing work of the committee (see also *Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 612-21):

When parents request infant or child dedication in public worship, the pastor and elders of local congregations should (1) engage in pastorally appropriate ways to celebrate the birth or adoption of the child, to pray for the child and parents, and to call for the commitment of the parents to nurture their children in the Lord, (2) engage in convicted and winsome teaching on the subject of infant baptism, and (3) refrain from leading rituals of infant or child dedication in public worship services.

Grounds:

- a. Congregations should minister to those who will not present their children for infant baptism with a spirit of gratitude to God for the gift of these children, offering encouragement and accountability to parents as part of faithful, pastoral ministry.
 - b. A faithful, encouraging, pastoral response to parents promises to reduce unhelpful ambivalence toward members who do not affirm infant baptism.
 - c. Many people do not embrace infant baptism because they do not understand how it is consistent with Scripture. Teaching on the subject offers a rich opportunity to promote greater biblical understanding and may lead the parents to present their children for baptism.
 - d. A ritual of an infant or child dedication in public worship is not required by the Bible and is not consistent with the Reformed confessions.
 - e. A ritual of infant or child dedication in public worship could easily create confusion about the meaning and purpose of the sacrament of baptism.
 - f. This principle is consistent with the Reformed confessions and with the past decisions of Synods 1888, 1964, 1973, and 2007.
3. That synod extend the term of the Faith Formation Committee for one more year with the following additional mandate:
- a. To identify appropriate models for developing a denomination-wide mechanism for promoting continued learning, reflection, and training on the topic of faith formation and discipleship. This is to be done in consultation with other denominational ministries and related agencies.
 - b. Provide quarterly reports on this work throughout 2011 and 2012 to the interim executive director with a final report to Synod 2013.

Grounds:

- 1) Faithful discipleship and faith formation is an urgent and ongoing concern for our churches.
- 2) While the Faith Formation Committee will complete its original mandate at the meeting of Synod 2012, the tasks of training, learning, and mutual accountability are ongoing.
- 3) The work of the Faith Formation Committee in shepherding the denomination in this topic has raised awareness of the hunger for resources and leadership to support faith formation at the classical and local levels. This movement toward stronger faith formation practices needs to be supported and encouraged.

- 4) While there are denominational ministries and other related agencies that support faith formation, there is currently no agency or office mandated to coordinate or oversee matters of faith formation.
(*Acts of Synod 2011*, pp. 829-32)

6. Young Adult Summit

That synod endorse the Young Adult Summit Proposal (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 50-55).

Grounds:

- a. This initiative will provide a visible, accountable voice for the young adults of our denomination.
- b. This initiative will spark interest in church government among the CRC's young adults.
- c. This initiative will help foster an institutional pathway for young adult input in the CRC and its work with young adults. It will also facilitate discussion about new ways for young adults to be involved in the life of the denomination.
- d. This initiative will help connect young adults with their peers from across the denomination (and the world) for mutual learning, support, and fellowship.
- e. This initiative will provide an opportunity for young leaders to be discipled, mentored, trained, and developed on an ongoing basis.

(*Acts of Synod 2011*, p. 857)

7. Form of Subscription Revision

That synod continue the work of the Form of Subscription Revision Committee II for one more year so that it can consult with representatives of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary and propose a revised version of the "Covenant for Officebearers in the Christian Reformed Church" to Synod 2012, addressing the following concerns:

- a. The need for positive, declarative commitments to teach, defend, and actively promote the confessions and Reformed doctrine of the CRCNA.
- b. The need to strengthen the scope and the binding nature of the commitment.
- c. The need to include a provision for accountability for those who sign this covenant, requiring them to answer requests for explanation of their views.
- d. The need to reword the description of the gospel in a way that avoids the impression of universalism.
- e. The need for a provision that those who sign this covenant will communicate their views to the church if they believe that a doctrine is not the teaching of God's Word (instead of saying that a teaching is irreconcilable with God's Word).

(*Acts of Synod 2011*, p. 871)

8. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

2. That synod recognize the Christian Reformed Church of Myanmar as a church in ecclesiastical fellowship with the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Grounds:

- a. The Christian Reformed Church of Myanmar is a Reformed church that adheres to the three forms of unity.
 - b. There has been a long relationship between our denomination and the Christian Reformed Church of Myanmar, particularly through Christian Reformed World Missions, but through other connections as well.
 - c. The Christian Reformed Church of Myanmar requests this relationship, and this association will be encouraging to both the Christian Reformed Church of Myanmar and the CRCNA.
3. That synod recognize the Christian Reformed Church of Haiti (Église Chrétienne Réformée d'Haïti) as a church in dialogue with the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Grounds:

- a. The Christian Reformed Church of Haiti has a current relationship with the CRCNA through the work of CRCNA agencies, known in Haiti as Sous Espwa (Source of Hope).
 - b. The Christian Reformed Church of Haiti identifies itself as a Reformed denomination in solidarity with the CRCNA.
 - c. The Christian Reformed Church of Haiti desires a deeper and more formal ecclesiastical relationship with the CRCNA while continuing to be connected to Sous Espwa.
 - d. This more formal ecclesiastical relationship will bless and encourage both denominations.
5. That synod approve the "Common Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Baptism" (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 354-55). (Appendix B will reflect the changed signatory as Rev. Joel R. Boot, Interim Executive Director.)

Grounds:

- a. The "Common Agreement" officially affirms a longstanding CRC practice of recognizing the validity of Roman Catholic baptisms (see Church Order Article 58; *Acts of Synod 1944*, p. 351).
 - b. The CRC, by entering into this "Common Agreement," would help testify to and remind us that we are baptized members not first of all of the CRC but of the "one holy catholic church."
6. That synod encourage CRC congregations to use the language of the common "Certificate of Baptism" (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, p. 356) in the issue of all future baptismal certificates.

Grounds:

- a. "Compatibility in the form and content of these [certificates] would be a sign of ecumenical cooperation and a safeguard of the validity of what we celebrate together as Christians" ("These Living Waters").
 - b. Use of this common certificate would remove unnecessary obstacles when Roman Catholics join the Christian Reformed Church or vice-versa.
7. That synod receive "These Living Waters" (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 357-440) as an ecumenical document on baptism and recommend it to the churches for further study and reflection.

Grounds:

- a. These documents have been prepared through extensive dialogue between representatives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and representatives of the CRC and other Reformed churches.
 - b. These documents offer detailed study of convergences and divergences between Roman Catholic and Reformed views of baptism.
8. That synod receive “This Bread of Life” (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 440-510) as an ecumenical document on the Lord’s Supper and recommend it to the churches for further study and reflection.

Grounds:

- a. These documents have been prepared through extensive dialogue between representatives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and representatives of the CRC and other Reformed churches.
- b. These documents offer detailed study of convergences and divergences between Roman Catholic and Reformed views of the Lord’s Supper.
(*Acts of Synod 2011*, pp. 821-23)

9. Continuing Education for Pastors

That synod approve the following four recommendations relative to the continuing education of pastors:

- a. That synod remind the churches of existing policy statements regarding continuing education (CE) for pastors (note *Acts of Synod 2000*, p. 681) in the context of the recognition that healthy, thriving pastors are pastors who participate in regular CE, and healthy churches are churches who have healthy pastors.
- b. That synod encourage the continuing development of healthy policy and practice for CE for pastors at the local church level, making use of resources available through Pastor-Church Relations.
- c. That synod instruct the churches and church visitors to make the issue of CE for pastors a standard part of the discussion with church councils during classical church visiting.

(*Acts of Synod 2011*, p. 836)

10. Church Order Article Supplement 13-c Change

1. That synod adopt the following replacement for Church Order Supplement, Article 13-c, Regulation b: “The minister contemplating service in a nondenominational church acknowledges this as an opportunity to encourage such a church to affiliate with either the Christian Reformed Church or a Reformed denomination similar to the Christian Reformed Church.”

Grounds:

- a. Although we agree that Article 13-c, regulation b as it stands may place the minister-on-loan in an untenable position; removing it altogether leaves the minister-on-loan without a sense of purpose in helping the church he or she serves.
- b. Our proposed replacement of Article 13-c, regulation b recognizes that a minister-on-loan to a nondenominational church has a unique opportunity to

help a church enjoy the benefits of belonging to a group of Reformed churches.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 872)

11. Sermons for Reading Services

That synod approve the work of the committee and encourage the churches to avail themselves of the sermons for reading services on the CRC website.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 856)

12. Pension Matters

1. That synod adopt the following changes to the ministers' pension plans for Canada and the United States as presented by the Pension Trustees effective July 1, 2011 (BOT Supplement section II, B, 9):

- a. Increase the normal retirement from age 65 to age 66.
- b. Advance the implementation of the change to the early retirement factor (from 0.3% to 0.5% per month) from January 1, 2014, to July 1, 2011.
- c. Freeze the final three-year average salary upon which benefits are calculated in Canada at the 2010 level.
- d. Change the normal form of retirement benefit from joint and survivor to single life with five years certain. (Participants can still elect from multiple options to receive a joint and survivor benefit at a slightly reduced level of payment.)
- e. Provide a transition into this benefit form change by making a supplemental survivor benefit available to participants who retire through 2016. The spousal supplement will be based on the years of ministers' participation in the Ministers' Pension Plan with the following schedule.

Year of retirement	Annual benefit per year of credited service
7/1/2011 through 12/31/2012	\$50
1/1/2013 through 12/31/2013	\$40
1/1/2014 through 12/31/2014	\$30
1/1/2015 through 12/31/2015	\$20
1/1/2016 through 12/31/2016	\$10

These supplemental payments will be payable to the minister's spouse at the time of the pastor's retirement for the lesser of ten years or the remaining life of the spouse. These payments will be taken from the Special Assistance Fund (SAF). Funding for the SAF continues to be provided through ministry shares.

- f. Effective July 1, 2011, an ordained minister of the Word who is participating in the Ministers' Pension Plan of Canada or the United States and reaches the Plan's normal retirement age may request a "pre-retirement in-service pension distribution" while still serving in one's current position with the CRCNA.
2. Any participant in the Ministers' Pension Plan in Canada or the United States who elects to become inactive in the plan as of June 30, 2011, is allowed to receive a "pre-retirement in-service pension distribution" at the earliest date allowed under the pension regulation of the respective country in effect at June 30, 2011.

(Acts of Synod 2011, pp. 813-14)

13. Ministry Share and Offerings

2. That synod receive the agencies and institutional unified budget as information and approve a ministry share of \$316.76 for calendar year 2012 (no increase over the 2011 amount) (BOT Supplement section II, B, 1-2).
- c. That synod accept the following new requests for inclusion on the list of accredited nondenominational agencies (BOT Supplement section II, B, 5):

Canada

- 1) Christian Economic Assistance Foundation
Christian Economic Assistance Foundation provides funding for a variety of Christian school events, conferences, research and publication, curriculum development, and student loans for high school students who plan to attend a Christian college.
- 2) Homestead Christian Care
Homestead Christian Care provides affordable housing options to persons with disabilities living in poverty. This agency is primarily focused on helping those with mental illness.

United States

- 1) Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies
Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies is a Christian ministry for field-based college level courses to train and educate in environmental studies focusing on stewardship of creation.
- 2) Paidia International Development
Paidia International Development reaches out to Palestinian Christians, teaching values such as non-violence, conflict resolution, and integrity—all through adventure recreation. This ministry develops young Palestinian Christian leaders and helps them learn to share their faith. It also addresses the special needs community.

- d. That synod accept the following new request for inclusion on the list of affiliated agencies (BOT Supplement section II, B, 6):

Diaconal Ministries Canada

Diaconal Ministries Canada (DMC) works to inspire, equip, and encourage deacons in Canada as they work to transform communities with the love of God.

(Acts of Synod 2011, pp.815-16)

14. Christian Reformed Home Missions

That synod impress upon the churches that CRHM is working diligently to help churches engage in creative and relevant ministry in their local contexts.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 841)

15. Back to God Ministries International

That synod encourage the churches with respect to BTGMI to make full use of the media resources of BTGMI by “friending” them on Facebook, following them via Twitter, and becoming familiar with the many ways their expertise can guide the churches into relevant contact with their communities through media. Especially pertinent is the help that can be found at www.churchjuice.com for congregations seeking to enhance their ministry through effective websites. (See also www.reframemedia.com.)

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 844)

16. Christian Reformed World Missions

That synod urge churches to seek guidance from CRWM in engaging in the work of hands-on missions and in encouraging the work of partnership in missions.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 845)

17. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

That synod urge the churches to be in prayer for the binational directors and boards of CRWRC and for the Board of Trustees as they face the challenges of directing such a large organization.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 846)

18. Chaplaincy and Care Ministry

- a. That synod urge parents, the youth and education ministries in our churches, and Christian schools to encourage our young people to prayerfully consider a wide range of ministry options, including chaplaincy ministries and other specialized Christian vocations.
- b. That synod urge churches to pray regularly for chaplains who walk daily with people in crisis situations, have significant influence in secular institutions, and serve in difficult and sometimes dangerous situations—especially those who are separated from home and family by military deployment.
- c. That synod urge churches and classes to welcome chaplains at their regular meetings (some classes have appointed a “chaplain of the day” for each meeting) and to explore with them how to use their training and gifts to benefit the care ministries of the local church.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 818)

19. Disability Concerns

That synod encourage Christian Reformed churches, classes, and educational institutions to sponsor events to celebrate Disability Week from October 10 through 16, 2011.

Grounds:

- 1) Specific and intentional events that recognize the importance of breaking down barriers and including people with disabilities will remind God’s people of the welcome our Lord gives to all of his people (Luke 14:15-24) and will encourage them to press on toward becoming a community in which every member knows that he or she is indispensable (1 Cor. 12:12-27).

- 2) This date coincides with the denominational schedule for offerings, which assigns the third Sunday in October to Disability Concerns.
- 3) The Bible calls God's people to be a caring community as the covenant people of God. In 1985 the CRC committed itself as a denomination to eliminate barriers of architecture, communication, and attitude "in order to use the gifts of all people in our life together as God's family." Although our Lord Jesus calls all of his people to ministry in his church, the church has not always made it possible for people with disabilities to participate fully and sometimes has isolated them and their families.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 819)

20. Safe Church Ministry

That synod again remind all churches in the denomination of the importance of documenting, developing, and implementing a Safe Church Policy and Safe Church Team using the many resources available from the Safe Church Office.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 820)